



QR code for  
Portland Observer  
Online

# The HO



Inside, pages 4-7

# HOUSING



# The Portland Observer 44

'City of Roses'



Volume XLIV  
Number 15



www.portlandobserver.com  
Wednesday • April 9, 2014

Established in 1970  
Committed to Cultural Diversity *44 years of community service*

# Fighting Displacement

## Skeptics say housing investment will not cure gentrification

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A plan to increase public monies for the construction of more affordable housing units in the gentrified neighborhoods of north and northeast Portland is drawing a mixed review.

"It doesn't undo what was promised when the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area was established [in the year 2,000]," says Maxine Fitzpatrick, director of the Portland Community Reinvestment Initiative (PCRI) and co-chair of the Portland African American Leadership Forum (PAALF).

Fitzpatrick, says Mayor Charlie Hales' recent proposal of adding \$20 million to affordable housing stock in the heavily gentrified neighborhoods in north and northeast Portland, would help black families and other disadvantaged populations both stay and return to the area, but says the eventual construction of new housing units would not by any means act as a cure to gentrification.

Hales' proposal came last month after he converged with "50 leaders of the African-American community and neighborhood and business representatives", to try to rescue a planned development of a Trader Joe's grocery on northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street that would get support from the Portland Development Commission.

Hales called for the additional housing support after PAALF made local and national headlines for their protests of the Trader Joe's proposal in which they suggested the site should include construction of affordable housing in some capac-



PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland Community Reinvestment Director Maxine Fitzpatrick works to increase affordable housing choices in the inner city. She visits a property at 4064 N.E. Grand Ave. where she's trying to get the green light from the Portland Development Commission to redevelop the site into a multiple housing unit for seniors. She is hopeful Mayor Charlie Hales' recent proposal of \$20 million in additional monies for building more affordable housing units in north and northeast Portland will help fight displacement, but says it by no means is a cure to gentrification.

ity.

The specialty grocer was almost certainly going to build on the lot when the PDC deal was announced in November, but by January a Trader Joe's spokesperson announced they were pulling out of

the deal citing the community's protest.

The city had already assured \$34.4 million to subsidize housing construction through 2021 that is reserved for low and moderate income people and families.

According to the report Portland's African American Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile, by the Coalition of Communities of Color and School of Social Work at Portland State University, black people make up 18

percent of the local homeless population, compared to just 7 percent of the general population. African Americans are also overrepresented in emergency shelters and transi-

continued ▼ on page 18